

# C.O.C.A. TIMES

COIN OPERATED COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 2  
ISSUE 8  
JULY. 2003  
\$14.95



## Fill 'Er Up!

by Paul Hindin



English coin-op version. Made in the 1930's. It is a very hard to find version. Not much is known as to manufacture, but stands approx. 12" tall.



The Oronite Lighter Fluid Dispenser was made in the early 1930's. Made by the Lark Distributing Co. this machine actually used a fluid canister to supply the lighter fluid. When can was empty, it was replaced with a new can.



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# C.O.C.A. TIMES

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## *Message from Our President*

The opportunity of serving the C.O.C.A. Club as President is winding down. I enjoyed working with and meeting the great members of this super organization. I only hope the new president will enjoy it as much as I have.

At our November meeting, we will be electing a new slate of officers. If you would like to run, please e-mail me or call me and I will explain to you, all the details of the job you are interested in. You must be present, in Chicago, at the meeting to vote. Currently Jim Grimwade and Alex Warshaw have been nominated for the office of President. We are currently looking for nominations for Vice-President and Secretary, and Dan Davids has been nominated for Treasurer. Let's make the elections interesting, and have more running for these offices. If you don't like what the club is doing, here is your chance to make changes.....

I want to personally thank all those who have made my job a lot easier. I have had great support from those who write articles on a regular bases and a big special thank you to Randy and Sue Razzoog who are the real brains behind the C.O.C.A. magazine....enjoy your summer and see you in November.



President  
Paul Hindin

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**Deadline for Next Issue:  
August 20, 2003**

# HELP....What Can You Tell Me???

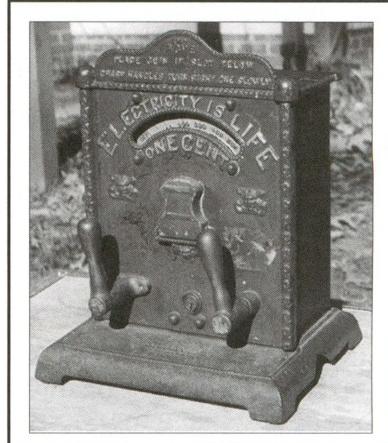
Was hoping that one of the readers might be able to give us some information about one of the machines in our collection? We ran a request in CDI a few years ago, but no one could tell us much. Paul suggested that one of our C.O.C.A. Times readers might have some information.

We picked up the machine (with a whole box of loose parts) at the Chicago show a few years ago from another collector who didn't know much about it. He wasn't sure it was complete, or even that all of the parts in the box were for this machine. He'd also paid a pretty penny for it, so he naturally couldn't give us a "box lot deal". We hadn't found anything unusual at the show yet, so we took a chance. After a good bit of fitting parts here and there, all of them seemed to belong somewhere in the cabinet.

The machine is very similar to a Mills "Little Firefly", but as you can see from the pictures, the very attractive castings indicate that it was made by the Advance Machine Co., of RAVENSWOOD STATION, CHICAGO USA. The marquee indicates that it was called "THE ACME". It's made of cast iron and is 9" high, 8-1/4" wide, and 4-1/2" deep with a cast base that is 1-1/2" in height, 9-1/2" wide, and 7-1/2" deep. After being told by a collector of "shockers" that there were some "repros" floating around, we looked it over very carefully, and all of the parts and castings appear to be "old" and original.

Can anyone help us with an age and/or any other information?

*Mike & Pat Gumula, 2127 Crescent Drive, Graham, NC 27253  
Call 336-578-3592; or E-mail: mggslots@netpath.net*



## Letter to the Editor

I am an old collector from way back, started in around 1975, at the urging of my older brother Orin Yeager. We used to make all the Chicago shows together, but he passed away in 1991 and sadly, I haven't been there since.

But my heart is always with the good people I have met through all the years, coin-op friends, and I always try to join any group that keeps our hobby going.

Thank You,  
John A. Yeager

## \* C.O.C.A. WEB SITE \*

Just a reminder to all.....that C.O.C.A. has its own web-site. It is maintained by member Al Fox and has news regarding shows, auction results, and classified ads, as well as a question and answer section.

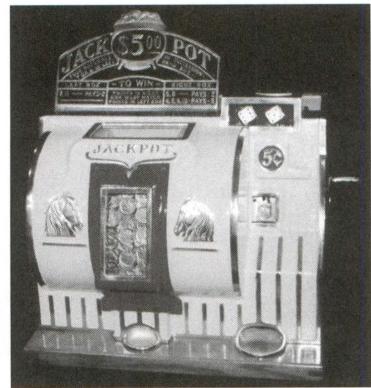
The address is: [www.coinopclub.org](http://www.coinopclub.org)



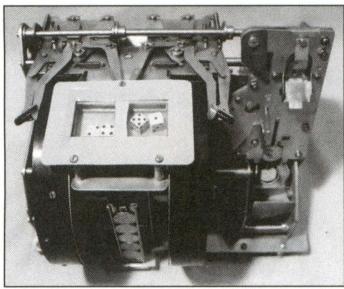
Nickel Model

# The Bally Reliance

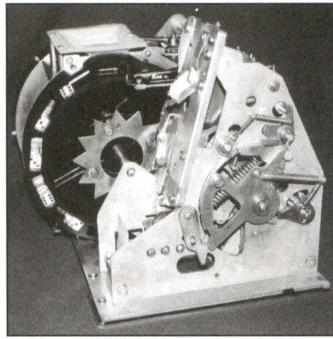
by Johnny Duckworth



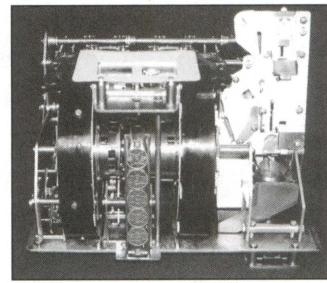
Quarter Model



Nickel Model



Nickel Model



Nickel Model

If you have ever seen the Bally Reliance you won't soon forget it. This dice machine is quite incredible as you play the game of craps in a slot machine. The first time you see one you try so hard to figure out how the machine can possibly do this. It is like magic. How can it throw the dice, know what number was actually thrown, and then payoff correctly? The mechanism is quite complicated compared to the traditional 3-reeler. The dice slide out of a drum below the glass in the player's window. It is a tight space, as the depth isn't much bigger than the actual dice. The dice can slide and bounce all over in the players window, but there is no way they can roll over and change the number they are set on. The dice are preset in two drums, a left and a right. The left is the first number thrown, otherwise known as the come out number. If a 7 or 11 are thrown first, you are a winner. If it is a 2, 3, or 12 you lose. If you hit another number in the left drum you then need to hit the same number in the right drum to win. The secret is each drum holds 13 pair of dice. When the drum lands in a position it throws the same number every time for that position. It can then payout if the

position it landed on is a winner. Production of the Reliance started in 1935 and it sold originally for \$119.50 for the nickel model and \$125.50 for the quarter model. This machine has so much character in the way it looks to the way it plays.

Towards the end of production, Bally tried to compete with their bolt-on jackpots which were all for show. These machines were promoted as the New Super Flash Reliance. To be more competitive, they also sold for a reduced price of \$92.50 for the nickel and \$95.50 for the quarter. It resembled the jackpot on the 3 reel machines because it boasted a flashy jackpot bulging with coins. What the player didn't know was that the bolt-on jackpot for the Reliance is actually separate from the machine itself and there was no way to physically win the coins in them. If you were lucky enough to hit the jackpot you still received the \$5 or \$25 jackpot token depending on the denomination played. The tokens were concealed in the window on the front of the machine. If the machine had the bolt-on jackpot added, the tokens were hidden. The tokens

would have to be redeemed from the owner or proprietor. They also changed the payout in the later production from 2-4 to 2-8 to try and spur more interest in the machine. The exterior of the machine is painted a flashy yellow. There are two polished horse heads on the front of the machine in the castings and the payout information is on the marquee on top.

I have heard stories of some dealers who have been around since the beginning of time taking 2 or 3 Reliance's to coin-op shows in the 70's and early 80's. Those days are over as most machines have found a home in someone's collection. I have consulted with knowledgeable dealers and collectors who have been in the business for many decades, and their best guess is that there are a few hundred machines total in existence. I am trying to compile a list of Reliance's regarding their denominations, payouts, serial numbers, back door colors, and whether or not they have bolt-on jackpots. If you could please email me any information on a Reliance that you or someone you know has, it

would be greatly appreciated. The information will be posted in an upcoming issue of the C.O.C.A. This is not a list of who has what, and no names or personal information will be published. I would ultimately like to find out, as close as possible, what serial number was started with and what final number was ended up with, when the payoff changed, when it was offered from 2-4 payout to 2-8 payout, and when the back door color went from a dark brown to a light tan color. I am also trying to include what machines still retain the bolt-on jackpots. Please email me at [BallyReliance@msn.com](mailto:BallyReliance@msn.com) with any information you may have, as I am very interested in learning more about the machine. I have information on several machines so far, but I know that there is much more that other collectors can contribute. The only way to find out any more information on the Reliance is for collectors to share it! The photos of the Reliance's in this article have been completely restored by Two-Bit Restorations. Jeff Frahm has brought these machines back to life. Now, they look and play like the day they were made: perfect!



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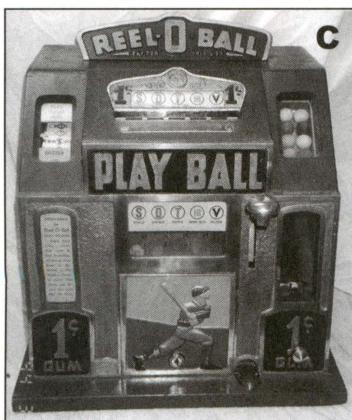
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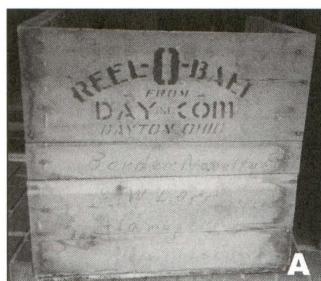
# REEL-O-BALL

by Tom Gustwiller

About 15 years ago I purchased 2 machines that came out of New Mexico. The machines were called Reel-O-Ball (C) and were very unusual. They were made between 1932-1935 and not only rare but new in the original crate.



(A) I was told that in the early 1950's the operator of Border Novelty took a bulldozer



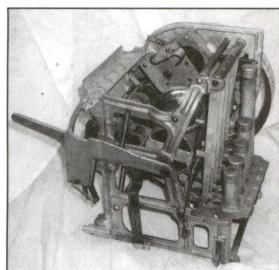
Umpire and used their old mechanisms for their new machine. (B) They built up a new cabinet around these mechanisms with a new large gum dispenser and the old token dispenser idea. The motif of the Reel-O-Ball was baseball and tokens were made specifically for a single,

double, triple, etc. totaling 5 different (D). For one cent you could gamble and get a token (if you won) worth so much in trade and get a free gumball. There are about 6-8 of these machines known. I've been lucky to own 3 of

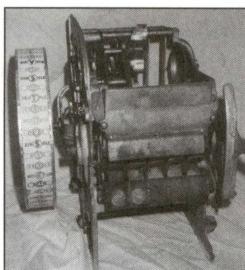
them through the years. Yendes Mfg. must have received more orders than they had original iron mechanisms for because one of the machines had an aluminum mechanism. They probably had some machine shop to duplicate some of the old iron

and pushed dirt in front of the door of his storage unit that was in the side of a hill. The law was so tough on gambling that he decided to close his business. (Probably the Johnston Act of 1951). Inside the storage area were many pinball's, jukeboxes, and a few trade stimulators along with 2 new machines called Reel-O-Ball.

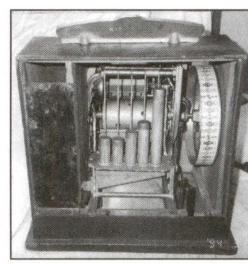
The machines were in their original shipping crates ready to be put on location but they never made it for some reason. Money was tight after the depression so many companies tried to bring out old ideas as revamps to save money. Yendes Mfg. of Dayton, Ohio was making one of these revamps. Yendes took some obsolete machines like the Elk, Pilot, and



B



E



mechanisms in the new lighter weight aluminum. From the rear of the machine (E) you can see the gumballs were stored on the left side and the mechanism on the right side. This is a great playing machine that is sought after by all collectors especially those that like baseball types. At one time they sold in the \$4000 to \$5000 range but I haven't seen one sell for years.

# Domino and the Devils

by John Peterson

"What in heaven's name is that thing"? I looked up from my latest love to see Dearly Beloved standing in the doorway to my workroom, staring at the British game I had just retrieved from my most recent trip. I had to admit, when you objectively looked at "Domino, Model 4," it was a pretty sad affair. "So," she continued, "how much did you pay for this one and how much time are you going to waste on it"? Trying not to show the hurt, I replied, "I'm making \$150.00 per hour on this baby". "You're kidding" she hooted. "You'd have to sell this thing for thousands of dollars to make that kind of money". "Not at all", I replied, "Any shrink worth his Prozac would be chargin me at least \$150.00 per hour. This way, I can save that money plus my mother's reputation at the same time, to say nothing about having loads of fun fixing up this sweetheart". Snorting with disbelief followed by a muttered "Why didn't I listen when Mother tried to warn me"? Dearly Beloved headed upstairs, shaking her head and I was left again to my dreams of past splendor and future promise. I was about to begin another exciting odyssey and I could hardly wait. But, I'm getting ahead of myself.....



Recall, if you will, our last adventure ("This Corndog Won't Hunt", C.O.C.A. July 2002) and you will recognize the usual suspects: Ebay, rental car, cockpit transportation and a hapless optimism. The Ebay title this time was another winner: "**Rare Early Penny Arcade**"

it shouted. In the body of the description, it explained that this was a British game by the firm Handan-Ni Ltd. of London sporting the jaunty name "Domino, Model 4". After a breezy description of

the condition of the playfield it concluded with "very ornate castings and very very intricate complete beautiful mechanism. Much of the mechanism is brass and completely unmessed with. Easy restoration on this one so bid to win. Never seen one like it, sure it is rare!" There were two pictures and they displayed what looked to be a complete machine in fair to good condition with the cloth playfield in need of replacement.

I never had a chance. I would close my eyes and all I could see was this lonely orphan calling to me. I looked the machine up in my reference book and verified that it was made by Handan-Ni in 1913. Would you turn your back on a gently 90-year old guest from another country? Of course not! Neither could I. I had to have it.

I hesitate to tell you the next part of the story for fear you will think less of me, or even worse, you'll think more of me and have opportunity to use my system against me. I don't do this very often, only when I find something that I really, really want and think I cannot afford if the auction goes to its natural conclusion. If you play on Ebay, you know the "Buy it Now" function. For the uninitiated, it is a price (normally above the starting price) at which the seller offers to stop the auction and sell the item to the buyer if the buyer agrees to the price stipulated. Only a fraction of the auctions on Ebay have this feature. In this particular case, I approached the seller with what I like to think of as a "Sell it Now" offer. The enticement to him was an offer substantially over his starting price. What he had to weigh was my offer to stop the auction early at my price against letting the auction continue knowing that I might be able to get the item at a lower price if no one bid up to my offer. In this case, the seller was agreeable and we made the deal.

As with my other successful auctions, I was able to

negotiate the privilege of coming to pick up the machine in person. The seller would just have to hold on to it for a month or so until I could arrange my schedule to get a layover in a nearby city. The seller was in New Jersey, a little way over the state line from Philadelphia. He agreed.

The next month found me in my rental car buzzing Northbound late one afternoon on my way to assume custody to my newest child. All I can say is “Thank God for Mapquest”! Without that service, I would still be driving around the countryside of southern New Jersey. I will never understand why Jimmy Hoffa wanted to be buried under the expressway next to Newark Airport when there are miles



and miles of bucolic countryside just over the Pennsylvania State line. As the sun was setting in the West, I pulled into the palatial estate of the seller. He met me in the garage and introduced me to “Domino, Model 4”. It was love at first sight. I vaguely remember him saying something about “don’t refinish the case” but that’s about it. I was afraid he would change his mind even though I had already paid for the machine. Besides, I was the British game expert, not him. I put the game in my car and started back on my two-hour drive to my hotel outside the airport in Philadelphia.

I’m going to leave out the part where I get lost. There seem to be certain consistancies to my adventures and unfortunately, getting lost is one of them. This time, I had no one to blame but myself and the twisty, turny little roads I was navigating in the dark. I did eventually find my way back to my hotel. I got the machine through Security the next morning with no trouble and the ride home in the cockpit was uneventful as well. All the way home, I kept thinking: “I’m a brain surgeon! I’m a brain surgeon!! This will be such a piece of cake”! I could not have been more wrong.

Domino, Model 4 was listed in the British reference “bible”, [Arcades And Slot Machines With A-Z British Manufacturers 1870 - 1970](#) by Paul Braithwaite as technically having been manufactured by London Automatic Machine Company, the successor to Handan-Ni LTD. of London. (Should you wish to add this book to your collection, contact fellow C.O.C.A. member and all around good guy, Roger Hilden at [www.Crownrivertrading.com](http://www.Crownrivertrading.com). Tell Roger I sent you!) According to Braithwaite, the name change was due primarily to the difficulty the Handan-Ni employees had getting their potential customers to understand the name of the company over the telephone. The game is a basic ball-catching scheme. You deposit a large British penny in the slot and receive six wooden balls. You then turn the handle at the bottom right of the case and a wood ball is propelled to the top where it drops out the center hole and onto the pinfield. With the large knob on the left midway up the case, you control the cup and attempt to catch the ball as it exits the pinfield. If you are successful, you turn the right knob midfield and it advances the arrow (which is missing on my game) in the center of the domino circle on the bottom portion of the playfield. If you are skilled enough to be able to catch four balls, the “jackpot” is released and you receive a grand total of one penny. Quite a handsome return for all that effort, won’t you agree? Right?? Who am I kidding? Compared to the American slots of the same vintage, this is a game designed by Old Scrooge himself. So, what gives with the miserly payout on these British games? And why do you have to work so hard to get it? To answer this question, it is important to recognize the differences between the American and British approaches to gambling and their national personalities to some extent.

In America, the earliest gambling devices were games of chance. You deposited your money and set the machine in motion. From that point forward, Lady Luck was your co-pilot, stewardess and bag smasher. American ingenuity vested in creating bigger and bigger jackpots inside more ornate case-work. Even our trade stimulators, for the most part, were games of chance. It was in keeping with the

American Dream that you invested a small amount of money with a (smaller chance of winning a great sum! After all, we were a nation of Manifest Destiny and a chance at instant wealth, albeit unearned in the traditional sense, was in keeping with our national image of ourselves as gamblers, gunslingers and takers of the Wild Frontier.

Contrast that, if you will to the genteel British. In Britain, the Betting and Gaming Acts of 1853 and 1854 imposed severe restrictions on all automatic games of chance and this was before any had been invented. The primary concern was that gambling would lead to the corruption of society. Having centuries of history behind them rather than a scant century plus change, the British had much more “society” to protect than did we. Consequently, the inventors of British games had to be careful to ensure that their creations did not fall within the notoriously broad category of “gambling devices or games of chance”! The practical result was that their games had a “skill” factor and paid out such a pitiful amount that a successful claim of gaming could not credibly be lodged against them. One unintended consequence of this is that legions of British children grew up playing these quasi-gambling games. If you see pictures of English fairs or seaside pier arcades from the early turn of the century forward, there are always children grouped around these allwins and the like, pumping in their pennies with adult-like adoration. This is easily contrasted with America where, to this day we still relegate the legal playing of slot machines and the like to the world of adult vice. The British restrictions were relaxed somewhat in 1960 but this basically explains the divergence between the gambling games of America and Britain. If you look at most of the British games, they are either games of “skill” or “amusement devices” like viewers, strength testers and automatons, what they call “working models”.

When I got “Domino” home and had a chance at a closer look, it readily became apparent that the fabric playfield which had been so prominently fea-

tured as the prime negative in the Ebay ad was the least of my problems. For starters, the mechanism was completely frozen with either rust or grime or a healthy combination of both. There was a section of the coin drop visibly missing and I had no idea how the game was supposed to play, an important factor in mechanism repair. And that was not the worst part. The front of the playfield was really two separate parts: the top section was wood backed fabric and it had a sizable crack in the wood. Even worse, the lower section was metal with a fabric overlay. The metal was completely rusted and totally unstable. Significant parts of the game were fastened to the metal and they were in jeopardy as well. This was not going to be one of my usual “clean up” jobs; this was a total restoration.

Have I mentioned my mechanical skills, or rather lack of? I know I have. This was fast shaping up to be the Mother of All Projects and I am the Son of All Thumbs. Whenever I’m faced with what appear to be insurmountable odds, I stand tall, throw back my shoulders and shout “**HELP**” as loudly as I can. In this case, the call went out in “Antique Amusement Magazine”, the British equivalent of our “Gameroom” and “C.O.C.A. Times” magazines combined. In short order, I received a reply from the editor of AAM, Steve Hunt. You can visit the AAM site at [www.aamag.co.uk](http://www.aamag.co.uk). Steve is a great fellow and a British game restorer in addition to his duties as editor. Turns out, Steve had restored a “Domino,

Model 4” for another British collector some time ago. He gave me that collector’s name and telephone number. One telephone call later, and I had some pictures of the restored game on the way. While I was awaiting their arrival, I received an email from another English collector who had a Handan-Ni “Domino” machine and offered help. I gladly accepted and he too sent me pic-



tures. When I received this second set, I could see that his game was related to mine but quite different. (See picture of tall case "Domino".) Apparently, when they named my game "Model 4", it was to distinguish it from earlier models. It should come as no surprise to you that my reference books neither distinguishes between models nor lists any "Domino" other than my "Model 4".

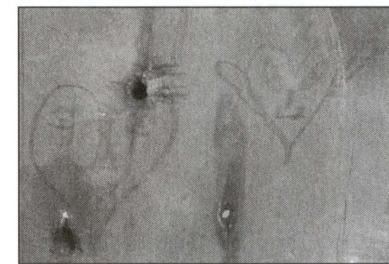
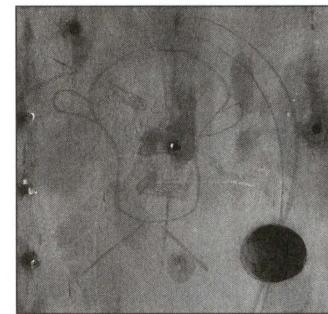
I know you're sitting on pins and needles to find out how this project turned out. So was I. Feat not, Dear Hearts. This is a tale of hope and redemption for the mechanically challenged for I am their Poster Boy. With enough patience, good German meal polish, a high speed Dremel and a digital camera, all things are possible. My policy is to keep a detailed written log in addition to pictures as I disassemble anything. I started with the playfield. All the upper playfield brass was removed and cleaned. The lower metal playfield was attached to the sides of the game with screws. Removing those allowed me to extract the metal playfield. The fabric on both upper and lower surfaces was in pitiful shape and came off with little encouragement from me. The biggest challenge of the project was the fabrication of the replacement lower metal playfield. Besides measuring and creating the cutouts, I had to remove and refit the circular domino and the brass ball view hole. After several false attempts, I was able to produce a reasonable facsimile of the original. The saving grace was that this area would be recovered in fabric again as was the original.

The upper wooden playfield had the issue of the large crack diagonally across it. Once I had it stripped of its shabby coverlet, I realized that the two sides of the crack were completely parallel at all points. In other words, the board had cracked and someone had, for a reason I cannot understand, pulled the two halves apart and fastened the upper portion with a screw so that the crack was institutionalized. The fix was as simple as loosening the screw and mating the two pieces together again.

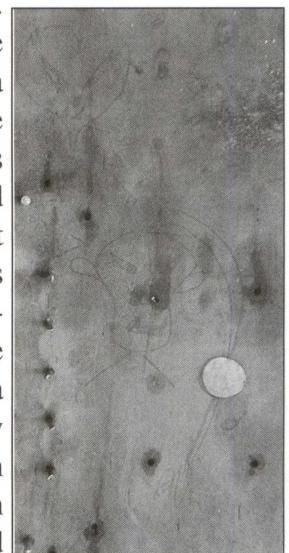
The mechanism was about what I expected: a lot of

work disassembling, cleaning, polishing and reassembling. It's mostly just grunt work and something I pride myself on doing well.

The final step was selecting new fabric to cover the playfield. The original appeared to be a brown cotton-like material. It was tattered beyond salvation and try as I may, I was unable to find an exact match for replacement. Rather than go with another mousy brown, I elected to throw caution to the wind and selected a royal purple. It looks quite regal, don't you agree?



My main regret in the whole project pertains to the recovering of the playfield. That regret is not about the color, or the texture, or the actual fabric itself but something much more surprising that I discovered when I removed the tattered cotton from the upper playfield. Stripped bare of their cover, I saw the most amazing sight: four little demons. If you look at the pictures, you will see the four faces penciled in by the original workers. Three of them are coy little devils but the largest one is a monster, complete with some type of stocking hat that trails across the top of the playfield eclipsing the top ball exit hole. What do you think this is all about? Why would workmen take the time to hide these scamps under almost a century of obscurity? Slow day at the factory? Fired from the Victorian Christian Greeting Card Company and



looking for revenge? Pagan worshippers in coin-op? Perhaps you have an idea of your own. We can never know the real reason, of course, but I like to think that these little devils were left as a type of time capsule for future generations. They are a way of saying to us, "Hi! We were here in 1913 making these games for a living but we also like to have a little bit of fun too, just like you do. We hope you find these four devils to be ambassadors of good will from our generation to yours, whenever that may be. Enjoy them and remember us kindly." With regret, I resealed the four in their new raiment. I hope that their future liberators will get the same pleasure that they afforded me.

And so ends the tale of Domino and the Devils. As an aside, shortly after getting "Domino, Model 4", I was able to find and purchase another Handan-Ni game called "Multiball". The purchase of that game led to the Mother lode of British games for sale, the "Glenn Collection".....But that's a story for another

## **2004 C.O.C.A. Calendar**

We have received a few pictures for the 2004 C.O.C.A. calendar but not enough for a complete calendar. For those who have sent numerous pictures, Thanks, but we use no more than one photo from each collector.

Photos may be submitted by August 1st. If we don't have enough photos by then, the C.O.C.A. calendar will be history.

Send photos to:  
Jack Freund, P.O. Box 4, Springfield, WI 53176,  
email: [jbhum@msn.com](mailto:jbhum@msn.com)

day. And I still have to tell you about the fabulous British fortune tellers too. Stay tuned.

I would be remiss if I did not mention three British chaps who went well out of their way to help me with this project. Without the kind assistance of Tony Atkins, Brian Bates and Steve Hunt, you would be reading a completely different story right now! And Dearly Beloved would be wagging her finger under my nose! Thanks, guys!

As always, I love to hear from other collectors of these wonderful British games. Fell free to call me at (952) 891-2312 or drop me a line at [jb4@charter.net](mailto:jb4@charter.net). Until next time, have a devil of a good time collecting! Cheers!

P.S. For those few readers who truly follow my ramblings and keep all the loose ends in mind, I will admit that I took the seller's advice to heart: I did not refinish the case!

## **NEWS FLASH**

**NOT ONCE, NOT TWICE, BUT THREE TIMES!**

Yes, you guessed it! C.O.C.A. members are all invited back to Jasper Sanfilippo's for Friday nights meeting. If you have been there already, then nothing more needs to be said. If you havent, then cancel all other plans and make it a priority to attend.

No where else will you see more music machines, arcade pieces and coin op.

Oh, did I mention a full size carousel and locomotive all under one roof? More precise info will be in the next C.O.C.A. issue!

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# Back to Springfield

by John Carini

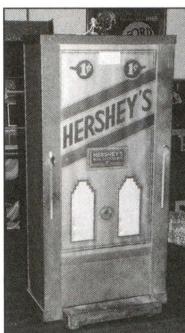
Last year the family went to Springfield, OH. I had mentioned what a great flea market it was and that we would be back. We visited the Springfield Flea Market Extravaganza again this May, and once again it was well worth the time.

This flea market draws approximately 35,000 people over the 3 day weekend. I knew it was big when we couldn't find a hotel room within 20 miles even when we tried to book 2 months in advance. This was the first flea market of the season, so we anticipated many finds.

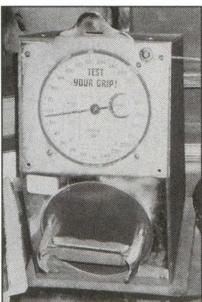
We started out early Friday morning because we wanted to stop at Webb's antique mall in Indiana on the way. We got there about 10:00 and found a few new coin-op machines. There was a strength

tester for \$125 but the handle was broken (see photo). Next we saw a 1950's Horoscope machine, (see photo), slightly over book price. I was tempted to buy it because I have the fortunes, but decided to wait for an older model. In one booth, we found a 1930s Star machine. It is very similar in design to the Sun Machine. The machine was rusty and had a cracked glass and was marked at \$175. In another booth we found a 5 cent slot machine which looked to be in good condition. In one display case we found 4 machines lined up together - a Coast Hot Nut Machine, a Master, a blue Regal and an Oak Acorn. All were above book pricing. We found a few cash registers, some pinball machines, stamp machines and the same \$265 rusty IMP we saw on the previous trip. We didn't purchase anything.

The flea market started at Noon and we got there at about 1:00 pm in the afternoon. (We found they had early morning entry for \$15/person). It was a nice

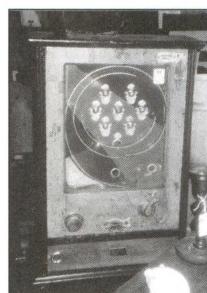


day, and we did a lot of walking. We saw some Fords and Victors, common machines for \$35. In one building my son spotted a machine. We had all walked by it because it was laying down and hard to see. It was a 1 cent Hershey Bar Vending Machine with nice old graphics (see photo). It was keyed and working. The booth owner wanted \$370 for it, and I was finally able to purchase it for \$260. I tried to identify it, but couldn't find it listed in any of the coin-op books. It appears to be a 1930s piece, but if anyone out there can help me identify, please do.



We got through about 60% of the flea market. I was tired and decided we could finish the next day. We drove a few miles to visit the largest of the 3 antique malls in the area - the Springfield Antique Center. There were a number of coin-op machines there, but most were pricey. At the entrance to the mall we found a 25¢ Eagle Slot Machine.

The blue porcelain Northwestern '33 machine we saw last year was still there, marked \$399. We found an old Columbia 25¢ Slot Machine



priced at \$1800 (see photo). We found an English Alwyn machine, priced at \$595 (see photo). One booth had a nice penny scale and a Tom's Peanuts floor model candy machine priced at



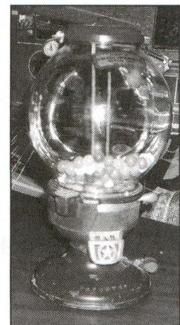
\$1200 (see photo). There were lots of common machines, Oak's and Topper's, most overpriced. We found a Shipman for \$250 and a Sparks Trade Stimulator for \$600. It was getting late so we went back to our hotel.



Unfortunately, when we got to our hotel they had given away the suite we booked. We knew we would never find another room anywhere else, so had to settle for a regular room (at a somewhat reduced rate). After a good nights sleep we were off to the flea market again. It looked like it might rain, but we kept our fingers crossed. We found one booth with about 30 restored common machines, fairly priced. We walked around for about 1/2 hour and it started to rain. Everyone headed for the buildings. Inside one, a man shouted from his booth "Aren't you the gumball guy"? It's funny how we always seem to run into a fellow C.O.C.A. member at just about every place we go.

We left shortly after, and decided to stop at the 2 large malls we hadn't yet visited - the AAA I-70 Antique Malls. In the first, we found a common aspirin machine. The two 1930s table top pinball machines (priced at \$750 each) we saw last year were also still there. We moved on to the second mall. My kids were starting to bug me, so we split up. Within a couple of minutes, my son Nick was hunting me down to show me a 1930s model A

Columbus machine he found. I asked the clerk to open the case and found the machine was in good original condition with barrel locks and nice decal. I asked if she would call the owner and offer a price. They said the booth owner was out of state and couldn't be reached, and that someone else had inquired about the machine the day before. The machine had only been there a week. The mall offered me the standard 10% discount. I really liked the machine so I purchased it for \$360 (it was marked \$399) - (see photo). As I was paying for it, the same person who was interested in it the night before called back to negotiate a price. They were told it was sold!



We left and headed for home. But, we will be back at the Springfield flea market next year. So, where will you find us next? We have 2 trips planned for this summer, which will include Des Moines, Iowa; Springfield, St. Louis and Kansas City, Missouri; and Louisville, Kentucky.

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# Lighter Fluid Dispensers

by Paul Hindin

Hey mister, do you have a light? The same question was being asked in the late 1920s. So to help all those people who used lighters, fluid dispensers, both coin-op and non coin-op machines started showing up in tobacco stores, general stores, taverns and gas station counters. And like other vending machines, competition was also there. Some of the larger companies were the Van Lansing Co., Atlas Mfg. Co. and The Lark Co.

Over the next 25 years these dispensers became very popular. "Fill Your Lighter for a Penny." They also caught on overseas. I have included an example of both a Spanish version and an English version. They were also made as a free dispenser (I guess the customers were on the honor system). As fuel prices increased and the throw away lighters became more popular, these dispensers were no longer profitable.

I have enclosed many photos of different lighter fluid dispensers. Special thanks to David Padlo for his help with photo contributions. I have been collecting these for the last 15 years, and I have noticed many are the same machines but with different labels or decals on with different distributors.

Over the years, most of the dispensers found their way to the garbage dump. Many are hard to find and are very collectible.

If you have any questions or more information about dispensers or more photos, please e-mail me at: bedvibr8or@aol.com or send photos to: Paul Hindin, 3712 W. Scenic Ave., Mequon, WI 53092. Phone: 262-242-3131.

**Happy Hunting!**



Serv-A-Liter 1¢ coin-op.  
Made of cast iron.

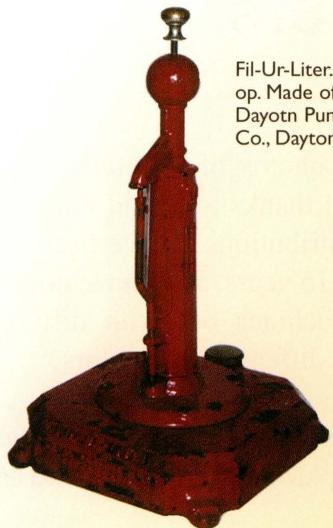


Fill Up Lighter Fluid.  
Made of wood, metal,  
glass and electric thru  
the center of globe.  
Non coin-op.



Made in Spain, this, I was told, is extremely rare. You need to deposit a small Spanish coin and then slide a lever to get a squirt of lighter fluid dispensed. Made, I believe in the 30's this is much smaller than its American counterparts.

Fil-Ur-Liter. Made of brass and bronze. Non coin-op. Dayton Pump & Mfg Co., Dayton Ohio



Fil-Ur-Liter. Non coin-op. Made of cast iron. Dayton Pump & Mfg. Co., Dayton, Ohio.



Original Zippo decal. Round smooth glass globe.



The British Filling Station was England's version of a lighter fluid dispenser. Very rare and certainly hard to find, this dispenser was a little larger than its American counterparts. Works off a large English penny, this machine was usually found in a filling station.



The Standard non coin-op fluid dispenser is from the mid 30's. Probably was offered as Free lighter fluid for all gas customers. Sat on the gas station counters.



Fil-A-Liter. 1¢ coin-op. Made of cast iron and aluminum.

Nasco Lighter Filling Station. 1¢ coin-op. Made of cast iron.



Van Lite. 1¢ coin-op. Made of cast aluminum. All nickel plated. Van Lite Corp. Embossed on back of machine.



Serv-A-Liter Co. 1¢ coin-op. Made of cast aluminum. Indianapolis, Indiana



Very rare coin-op lighter fluid dispenser. The Lark Filling Station was made in 1935. As you can see in photo, this very attractive fluid dispenser attracted customers with its lite top. The upper half of the dispenser lights up and has a great look.

Another very desirable coin operated 1¢ lighter fluid dispenser. Looks alot like early gas pumps. This unknown manufacture probably copied the Van Lite design as much of the machine is similar.



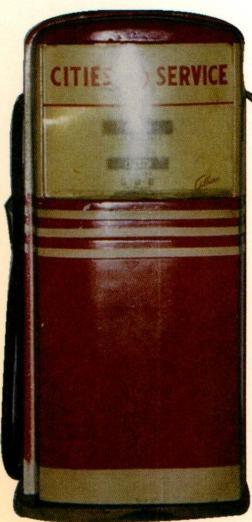


Made for the Spanish market this coin-op lighter dispenser works off a pump system. Unusual and rare, this lighter was made in the mid 1930's. No name can be found.



The Firefly is a small non coin-or dispenser. Probably found in country stores and tobacco stores this lighter fluid dispenser was used on the honor system.

1950's Gilbarco Wood Lighter fluid, push button on top of pump once to fill lighter. Made of wood. Non-coin-op.



1¢ Acme Lighter Fluid Dispenser. Made in 1927, this clockwork mechanism works similar to a real gas pump. Very rare.



Van Lite 1¢ coin-op. Cast aluminum. Chrome and red wrinkle finish. Smooth glass globe. Fill Up decal.



New Zippo Lighter Fluid Machine. Non coin-op. Made of cast aluminum and wood.



Van Lite 1¢ coin-op. Original Van Lite decal. All nickel plated. Fluted glass globe.



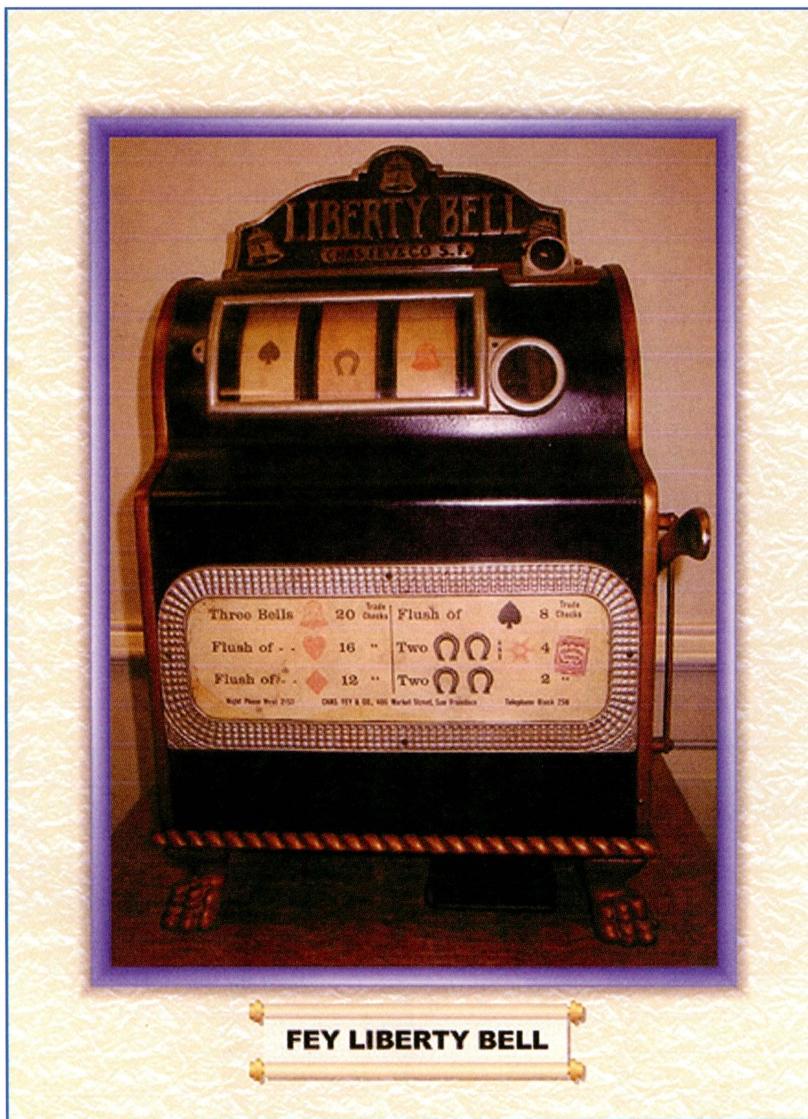
1950's Gilbarco Wood Lighter Fluid push button on top of pump once to fill lighter. Non coin-op. Made of wood.

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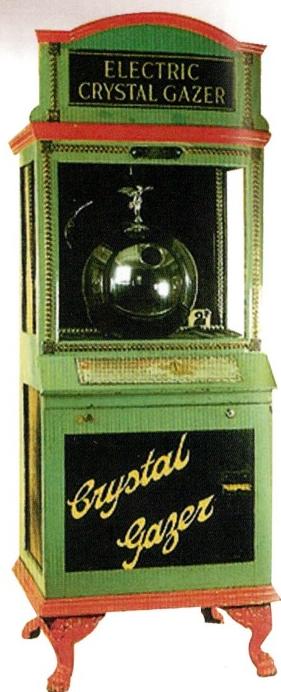
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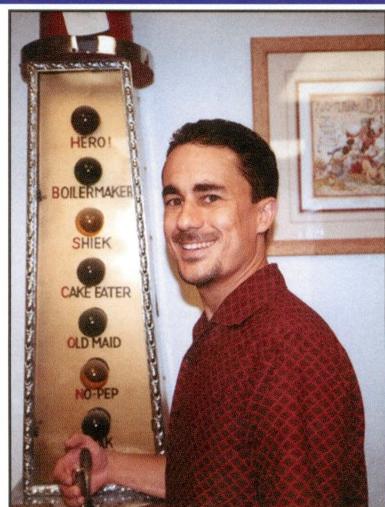
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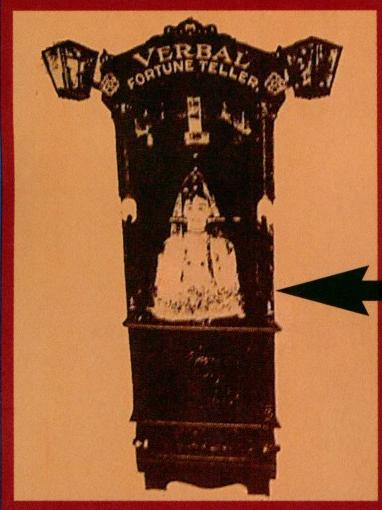
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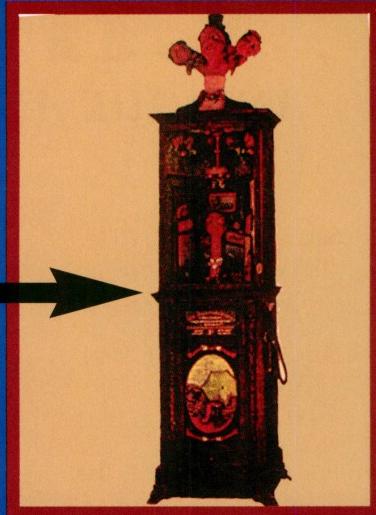


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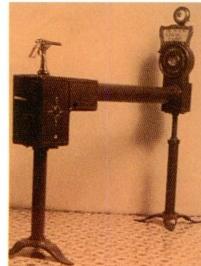
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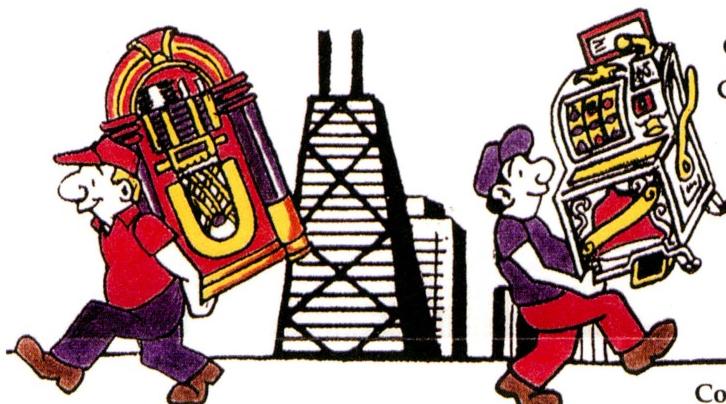
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# Watling "Guesser" Scale - 1902

by Jim and Merlyn Collings

The Watling Manufacturing Co. of Chicago produced a handsome oak or birch mahogany guessing scale. If the patron could guess his/her correct weight beforehand (using the guessing pointer), the penny would be returned in the money-back cup on the front column (see photo 1). This was Watling's first entry into the scale market. The scale has wonderful wood-grained paneling, an ornately decorated cash door (see photo 2), upper glass side panels that reveal the spring mechanism, and the head has a beaded and fluted design. Every time we gaze at this scale it reminds us of an unusual grandfather clock.



PHOTO 2



PHOTO 1

The Musical Guessing Scale (Style 1) is extremely rare, only one of these is known. The musical roll or apparatus was probably adapted from a Watling Upright Slot Machine. Notice the ornate engraving of Beethoven on the musical panel (see photo 3). The original marquee on the musical scale is shown here as well; It reads: Free if you can guess your weight. There are very few of these original marquees known.

*Style One - Equipped with musical instrument and fortune-telling device.*

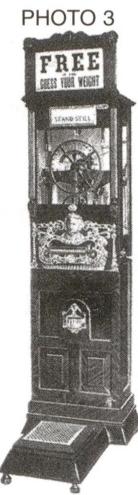


PHOTO 3

The second variation (Style 2) does not have the musical adaptation; instead it has a reverse on glass identification sign which reads: Guess Your Weight, Get Your Money Back, with silver letters on a red

background. This is the scale most scale collectors identify with (see photo 1 again). As the patron prepares to drop his coin, he first turns a nickel-plated brass knob to set the guessing pointer to his assumed weight. If he guesses his weight within a pound, the penny will be returned in the money-back cup, giving him a free weight, the operation of the "Guesser" scale is unique and clever. Inside the scale cabinet at the bottom are four large dry cell batteries which are connected to a celluloid and the guessing pointer behind the face. If the guessing pointer lines up with actual weight pointer, an electrical current will allow the celluloid to open a coin chute flap that leads to the money-back cup. If the two pointers do not match, the coin will be released to the coin box when the patron steps down. To the best of our knowledge only around two dozen of these scales have shown up. The "Guesser" scale was a pioneer "penny-back" scale and established Watling as the top scale leader of the 20th century.

The Guesser Scale (Style 3) appeared around 1903, and was used primarily for indoor use. The same rich cabinet and design was employed. It differed from the other styles, having a round dial with a decorative bezel. The dial obscured the frontal view of the mechanism. The decorative sign "stand still" was put in the middle of the dial (see photo 4). The two previous styles had a square piece of glass with reverse letters and numbers acting as the scale face, instead of a round dial. It's inventor Gustav F.W. Schutlze also patented an earlier rotatable, crescent shaped dial having a shutter. The opening and closing of the shutter mechanism proved to be too confusing to the patron.



Style Three

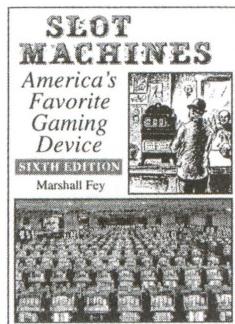


By 1904 a "plain front" scale with the same cabinet as styles 1 & 2 was used again. The guessing mechanism, selector known, money-back cup, and reverse-on-glass sign were removed and replaced by oak or birch mahogany panels (see photo 5). These features were probably removed due to maintenance problems. The "guesser" or plain front scale should highlight any coin-op collection. It has great historical significance and is aesthetically pleasing.

We would like to thank Bill and Jan Berning, Chris Steele, and Jeff Storck for their continued support and expertise.

Recently, Bill Futrall of Loraine, OH, a fellow coin-op collector, found a 1903 "Arcade" scale made by the Colonial Scale Co. (see C.O.C.A. Times, Vol. 1, Issue 1, March 2001). Bill finally bought this scale after discovering it ten years ago. As far as we know, this is the third one that has surfaced!

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# The Early Demise of Large Glass-Domed Vendors

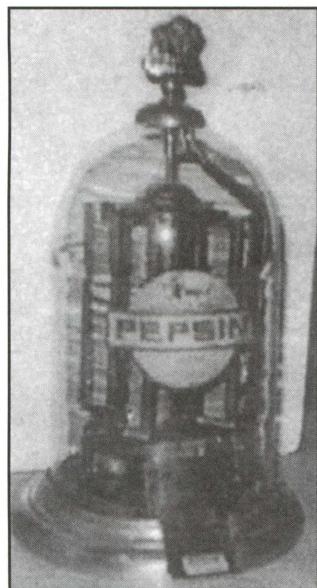
by the late Ken Rounds

One might wonder what factors were behind the sudden disappearance, more than 75 years ago, of the magnificent glass domed-vendors. These items include such examples as BUFFALO GUM and LITTLE GEM vendors, created by the White Vending company, and the PEPSIN GUM vendor (ca. 1904) of the Case Chicle Company.

To the best of my knowledge, the last glass-domed vendor was built in 1923 by Advance Machine Company. It was called the SELECTIVE VENDOR. Smaller versions, such as TRUE BLUE (Automatic Sales Co., ca. 1905) and LONDON NOVELTY (Owl Vending, ca 1905), were equally popular. Nearly every machine vended penny tab gum. Some of these vendors operated with automatic rotary motion, which enticed many a person to drop in a penny just to see the action. Others utilized the lever injection method.

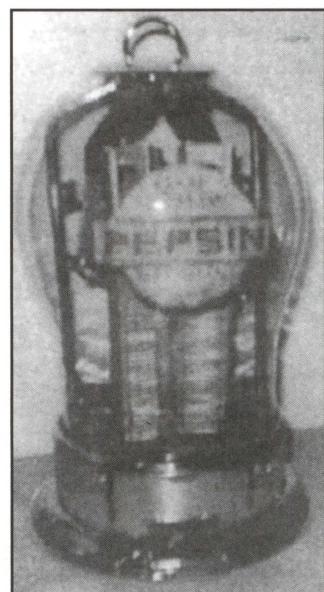
Here is my personal theory surrounding the untimely demise of these machines. Most of these vendors were placed in locations that lent themselves to hard, rough treatment. This included bars, pool halls, confectioneries, etc. Having a big glass dome, they just didn't hold up. Also, these vendors were refilled by removing the domes, and accidents occurred with unfortunate frequency. Replacement globes were expensive, and it was this expense that probably spelled the end to this sort of machine.

In today's high pressure, fast action world, glass machines of such fragility would even stand less of a chance. But a few of these early vendors have survived intact, two of which are pictured here. By the way, additional theories on why this type of vendor had disappeared are welcome.



*Case's PEPSIN vendor housed two columns of tab gum. Each lever, when pressed downward, ejected a single piece of gum. The coin that was deposited acted together with the slide element to create this force.*

*White's BUFFALO vendor with a clock-works rotation, which moved one column to the right after each penny was deposited and product vended.*



# It's The Hunt, Not the Kill

by John Wilcox

One of my favorite sayings is “It’s the hunt, not the kill.” *Oh boy, do I have a story for you.....*

I’ve been collecting for approximately 35 years. I’ve collected all kinds of goodies. When I picked up my first slot machine 25 years ago, more or less, something took hold of my brain. The same thing happened with jukeboxes. I’ve basically stayed with these two types of collectibles representing our history. Through the years I’ve had many great machines, but I always think of that first machine. Mine was a 1927 Rock-Ola 5 cent slot machine. I acquired the jewel from a fellow that had had it for years. I had heard about the slot machine from a friend. I called the owner and when he stated he wanted \$10.00, I stated I would be right over. I kept it for several years, and finally sold it for \$1000.00. the subsequent owner kept it for a couple of years and then sold it for \$1500.00 at a time when the values of slot machines were increasing a lot. But, “it’s the hunt, not the kill.”

Around this same period of time I had a friend by the name of “Bill” Williams. He was 30 years older than I was, but with our mutual interest in slot machines, jukeboxes and other coin operated machines, the age difference didn’t matter. Sometime in 1978, he stated that he had a friend who lived in the Nevada City/Grass Valley area that had previously owned a vending business and had a lot of vending equipment that included jukeboxes, pinball machines and some slot machines. Needless to say, we hit the trail. We spent a day driving around trying to locate Bill’s old friend. Nobody knew what had become of Bill’s friend. It seemed he had just disappeared.

Approximately 10 years ago, another friend of mine, Al from Nevada City, called stating that he had just acquired 15, early 1940s, console slot machines. He stated he had picked them up from an

old vendor who had had the machines in storage. Bill and I, along with other collectors, were envious of Al. Some time later, Al stopped by our store, Oldies But Goodies, with 5 or 6 pictures of the console slot machines he had acquired from the old vendor. The pictures indicated that the slot machines were complete! We were so excited for Al for having made such a find.

The years rolled by. Everyone went their own way and on their own little treasure hunts. Then, one morning a couple of months ago, Al from Nevada City called out of the blue. He wanted to let me know that 12 of the console slot machines that he had acquired from the old vendor were for sale. He stated that he had an offer from a fellow who lived in Utah. The fellow from Utah had said that he would fly from Utah to San Francisco, rent a U-Haul, and drive to Nevada City to pick up the slot machines. However, there would be a delay because of prior commitments. He could not make the trip for 3 weeks. I told him that I was interested. I also told him that I had a friend who would be interested and that we could be at his house that afternoon or the next day. We made arrangements for the next day.

I called my friend Jim. Jim lives approximately an hour away. I told him my story and asked if he would be interested in going on an adventure in the “Gold Country” and possibly bring back some “jewels” from the past. (*Jim is a collector like myself. We have a mutual interest in collectibles from the 20s, 30s and 40s.*) Of course, Jim agreed to go with me. We met the next morning in the town of Marysville which is located about half way between our two towns. We then headed for Al’s home in Nevada City. (*Al’s home is a neat farm house that was built sometime in the 1880s.*) Next we went inside to look at the console slot machines. Considering their age, we were pleasantly surprised

to find that overall they were in good shape. We made our deal with Al, loaded the machines in a trailer, and drove away. When we reached our next destination, by flipping a coin, we divided up the *jewels*.

There were 4 - 5 cent and 10 cent Jennings Silver Moon Bell Fruit machines; 2 - 5 cent and 10 cent Jennings Bob Tail machines; 1 - 5 cent Watling Big Game machine; 1 - Pace 5 cent Saratoga Horse Racing machine; 2 - Pace 5 cent Saratoga Horse Racing machines with a pinball mechanism built into the cabinet; 1 - Watling 25 cent Bell Fruit machine that had a great mechanism but a case that needed more than some TLC. And finally, what we both thought was the best of the lot, a Mills 5 cent Console. It has novelty circus animals on the glass and the reel strips, plus it too has a pinball mechanism built into the console. The mahogany case has matching grain in front with strips of East Indian rosewood insets.

Next came the initial decision making, regarding how we would go about restoring the machines. And then the fun began.....

In order to access the inside of the consoles, I had to drill the cabinet locks on 2 of the Silver Moons and the 2 Bob Tails. When I lifted the mechanism out of the 10 cent Silver Moon, I discovered that the double jackpot was filled to the brim, as was the coin tube, with silver/mercury dimes. The count ended up at approximately \$32.00. The oldest dime was 1916 and the newest dime was 1938. This indicates this slot has not been played for 65 years. The remaining 10 cent machines netted another \$8.00 bringing the total to approximately \$40.00. The coins in the 5 cent machines were just as exciting! The oldest nickel was a 1912V and the newest nickel was 1948. Most of the nickels were buffalo heads from the 20s and the 30s. Wow what a find!

In the last couple of months we have stripped the paint from most of the consoles as they've had a lot of wear and tear, and were rough. Jim has put all

new walnut and maple veneer on the cabinets and they have turned out fantastic. Everything Jim touches turns out beautiful, he has a true artistic touch. Instead of chrome plating, all the metal has been done in nickel-plating which seems to make the machines look richer. These machines all have the original paper/stickers showing how to remove and replace the mechanism. In addition, they have the original paperwork with serial numbers and a description of each machine. I've enclosed pictures showing the before and after.



BEFORE



AFTER



So, as I stated in the beginning, "It's the hunt, not the kill." The search might take years, this one took almost 25 years, but it is well worth it in the long run. Don't give up on whatever you are going after. Just hang in and your dream will come true!

# TALES OF THE HUNT

Hosted by **Jack Freund**

I have a trade stimulator tale and a vending tale for you this issue.

I need your tale for future issues. Please submit to:

*Jack Freund, PO Box 4, Springfield WI 53176 or E-Mail to: jbgum@msn.com*

A photo of your find really enhances the story.

*Our trade stimulator tale was sent in by Stanley Etlick of Moosie, PA. Let's title it...*

## YARD SALE FOLLY????

My tale of the hunt happened in August of 2001. I was headed to a birthday party for my cousin in Montdale PA. which is about 10 miles north of Scranton. I was driving up route 247 and noticed signs for a yard sale. As I passed the sale I could see it was mainly knick-knacks and glassware. I continued on. Assuming there would be nothing of interest for me. About a half mile past the sale I thought to myself that since the birthday party didn't start until 3:00p.m. maybe I should turn around and take a look.

At the first table I walked up to, sitting among the knick-knacks, was a green Imp trade stimulator. The price tag read \$10.00. The women in charge of

the sale told me that her husband belonged to a local men's association and had brought the Imp home in the early 1960's. It was in excellent condition, worked good and only needed a back lock. I offered her \$7.00 and she agreed.

After I paid her I explained what it's purpose was as a trade stimulator. She had thought it was some sort of bank.

The moral of the story is you never know where you are going to find these devices. So stop at every yard, garage and tag sale. Look at everything, even box lots. The "finds" are few and far between but they're not all folly.

---

*Now for our vending tale. Terry Harte shares his tale of good fortune.*

*Remember the movie "Dumb and Dumber"? Let's call this tale....*

## GREAT AND GREATER

Throughout the 1980's on the west coast in Pasadena, California there was a great coinop and advertising show held once a year called "The Fun Fair". It was during one of these shows where I was selling my arcade, gumball, peanut, and pinball machines or anything that I could make a buck on, that an older man came up to me and started a conversation. He said he was in the vending machine retail business and had several older machines he wanted to sell. We talked about what he had, how many he had and what kind of money he wanted. He

didn't stay at the show long. He gave me his phone number and said I could call if I wanted to.

I thought this could be something, but usually the guy has a few Acorns. Victors. Fords, etc. and thinks they are worth a fortune. I contacted him the next week and made plans to visit him on a Tuesday at his place of business. It turns out his business was in the industrial section of downtown Los Angeles. When I got to his warehouse it was a plain building with lots of new candy, vending, coffee and ciga-

rette machines. I thought this was probably a mistake. He invited me to his upstairs office to see his machines.

When I walked into his office, I almost fell over in shock! All around his large office was some of the rarest and earliest gumball and peanut machines I had ever seen. After looking at all of them including some really great manufacturer's original literature on machines, he took me into his walk-in safe. Here was the collection of machines he wanted to sell. *They were his "duplicates and overflow".*

I bought them all for a really good price. I tried not to show my excitement, but it was really hard. He told me that someday he would retire and sell off the whole lot. I asked him to please call me first! I loaded the machines into my van and went home. My collection had increased in desirable machines. I got

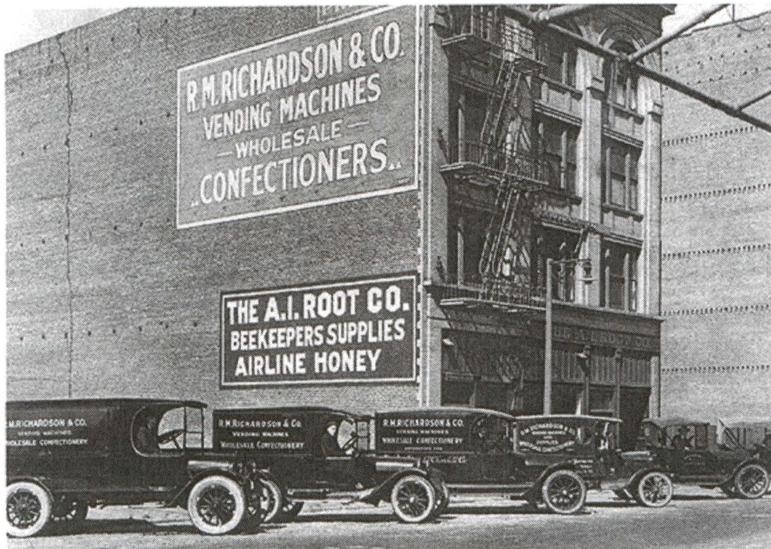
three circa 1892 *Stollwerck* vending machines, two with the red porcelain sides, one EE Junior 3 Shot Basketball, one circa 1928 *Autosales Chicklets* gum with red porcelain, one Fey Midget trade stimulator, one Mills Target Practice and 15 other miscellaneous lower end peanut and gum machines. All of this just the tip of the iceberg; much more could someday be available.

For years after I would call him to see if he wanted to sell anything else. No he said, but would let me know. Years later his son Robert called me to say that Dad had retired and he (the son) wanted to sell off everything because he didn't like any of it. The son collected old coins and wanted to expand his

coin collection. I bought the entire collection and literature for less than half what the current *Silentsalesman* price guide was. That was 1996.

The man who originally sold me the first batch of machines was Jerry Richardson of R.M. Richardson & Co. Vending Machines and Confectionary. His family's business started in 1908 in San Francisco. Over the years various family members had saved several of the machines that had actually been on route. As new machines came on the market, the old ones usually went to the scrap yard or were sold off, except for what his family kept. I told Bill Enes of

this find on the condition that he cannot tell anyone else. *Many of the gumball and peanut machine pictures and vintage advertisements seen in "Silent Salesmen Too". Were from Jerry Richardson.*



THE RICHARDSON COMPANY EARLY FLEET  
OF SALESMEN'S AUTOMOBILES

It was a stroke of luck that I met this man and his son. Thanks to their family's business and the fact that they saved all these machines and literature, my collection and the entire hobby benefited with valuable information and history. If anyone is interested in more detailed information and history on the Richardson's vending machine business, please email me at [twharte@earthlink.net](mailto:twharte@earthlink.net) or send me your mailing address or fax number and I can send you two articles about their business from a trade-vending magazine dated 1953 and 1954.

# California Needs Money

by John Wilcox / Oldies But Goodies

For those of you not familiar with a new law that is being implemented in California, please read on.

In a notification from the "California Gambling control commission" it states that there is now an annual fee of \$500.00 required to be paid by individuals, dealers, etc. who repair, restore, and sell antique slot machines and any form of gaming equipment.

This also affects anyone who sells to someone in California as well as transporting a slot machine or gambling device over the state line.

As you see, this can and does affect all of us and could be the start of other states joining in on the bandwagon.

This will most likely include amendments as time goes on. Updates will be included as information presents itself. In the best interest of the club, collectors, and dealers, we ask that you contact the "California Gambling Control Commission" as well as your state legislators to voice your disapproval.

Remember, this could soon be your state.

## PA Law Update

by Stan Rothenberger

According to C.O.C.A. member Stan Rothenberger, the PA law for gambling devices has been amended. It has been revised from "prior to 1941" to any device 25 years old, from the current year.

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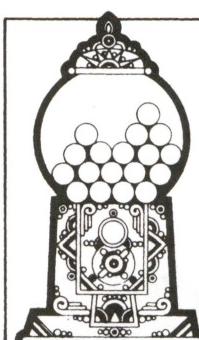
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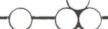
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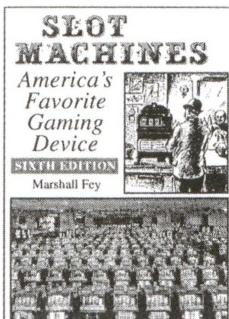
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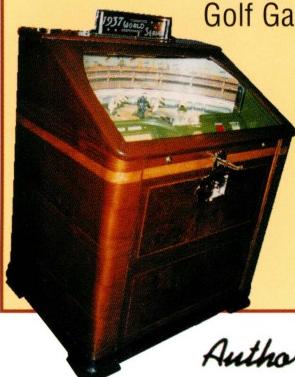
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